

J.R.R. Tolkien: MIDDLE EARTH, MIDDLE AGES  
A Dallas Medieval Consortium Course

*Time:* Tuesdays, 6:30 P.M. (Horchow Auditorium, Dallas Museum of Art)

*Faculty:* Prof. Dennis Kratz (UTD), Professor Stephen Maddux (UD), Professor Bonnie Wheeler (SMU) with guest lecturers as announced

*Brief Description:* J.R.R. Tolkien, author of the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy, was a great medieval scholar and a great story-teller. The two aspects of his life are not unrelated. This course explores Tolkien's work as rooted in ancient and medieval legends, mythologies, and literary genres and practices. We will seek to understand Tolkien's achievement both in its own right and as the continuation of the classical and medieval narrative traditions it both springs from and renews. Among the topics to be dealt with: Tolkien and...fantasy; classical epic; Germanic and Finnish mythology; Celtic legend & mythology; medieval philology; his critics; the silver screen; his successors in fantastic narrative.

*General Information*

*Caveat:* Assignments and lecture topics subject to change. Don't miss class and you won't miss announced changes.

*Disability Accommodations:* Students needing academic accommodations for a disability must first contact their campus's coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities to verify the disability and establish eligibility for accommodations. They should then schedule an appointment with their 'home' professor to make appropriate arrangements.

*Religious Observance:* Religiously observant students wishing to be absent on holidays that require missing class should notify their professors in writing at the beginning of the semester, and should discuss with them, in advance, acceptable ways of making up any work missed because of the absence.

*Course website:* <http://www.smu.edu/tolkien>

*Required Books:*

J.R.R. Tolkien *Silmarillion* Ballantine 0345325818

J.R.R. Tolkien *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, Pearl, Sir Orfeo* Del Rey  
0345277600

J.R.R. Tolkien *The Lord of the Rings* Houghton-Mifflin 0-618-26025-0

J.R.R. Tolkien *The Tolkien Reader* Ballantine Books 0345345061

Seamus Heaney, trans. *Beowulf: A Verse Translation* (Norton Critical Editions)  
026110263X

Tom Shippey *JRR Tolkien: Author of the Century* Houghton-Mifflin 0618257594

OLR=On-Line Reader contains many required and recommended readings: on website (<http://www.smu.edu/tolkien>). You must have course password and username to access the OLR.

*Recommended Books:*

- J.R.R. Tolkien. *The Monsters and the Critics* (formerly: *Beowulf: The Monsters and the Critics*). ed. Christopher Tolkien. Houghton-Mifflin, 1984. Reprinted Harpercollins, 1997. 026110263x. Currently out of print. It includes "On Fairy-Stories," but also the famous essay "Beowulf: The Monsters and the Critics," and many other interesting essays.
- Idem. *The Letters of JRR Tolkien*. Edd. Humphrey Carpenter & Christopher Tolkien. Houghton-Mifflin, 2000. 0618056998.
- Idem. *Unfinished Tales of Numenor and Middle-Earth*. ed. C. Tolkien. Houghton-Mifflin, 2001. 0618154943.
- Idem. *The History of Middle-Earth*. Ed. C. Tolkien.
1. *The Book of Lost Tales 1*. Del Rey, 1992. 0345375211
  2. *The Book of Lost Tales 2*. Del Rey, 1992. 034537522x  
The first version of Tolkien's mythology, dating from the 1910s.
  3. *The Lays of Beleriand*. Del Ray, 1994. 0345388186  
Verse narratives of the First Age.
  4. *The Shaping of Middle-Earth*. Balantine Books, 1995. 0345400437  
The second phase of the mythology, pre-LotR.
  5. *The Lost Road and Other Writings*. Del Rey, 1996. 0345406850  
The myth of Numenor/Atlantis. Modern dreamer with vision of the past.  
Next four volumes form the History of the Lord of the Rings. They give the successive drafts of the various parts of the LotR.
  6. *The Return of the Shadow*. Houghton-Mifflin, 2000. 061808357x
  7. *The Treason of Isengard*. Houghton-Mifflin, 2000. 0618083588
  8. *The War of the Ring*. Houghton-Mifflin, 2000. 0618083596
  9. *Sauron Defeated: the End of the Third Age*. Houghton-Mifflin, 1992. 0395606497.  
Includes the Notion Club Papers, with the 2<sup>nd</sup> version of the Fall of Numenor.
  10. *Morgoth's Ring: The Later Silmarillion, Part 1*. Houghton-Mifflin, 1993. 0395680921
  11. *The War of the Rings: The Later Silmarillion, Part 2*. Houghton-Mifflin, 1994. 0395710413  
Vols 10 & 11 give the post-LotR evolution of the mythology.
  12. *The Peoples of Middle-Earth*. Houghton-Mifflin, 1996. 0395827604  
Odds and ends.
- Humphrey Carpenter. *J.R.R. Tolkien: A Biography*. Houghton-Mifflin, 2000. 0618057021
- Jane Chance. *Tolkien's Art: A Mythology for England*. U of Kentucky P, 2001. 0813190207



Sept 16

### Memory and Mortality

#### *Required Reading:*

*Beowulf* (Seamus Heaney translation);  
Tolkien, “The Monsters and the Critics” (OLR);

#### *Review Reading:*

LotR : 3.6 The King of the Golden Hall; 5.3 The Muster of Rohan; 5.5-6 the Ride of the Rohirrim, the Battle of the Pelennor Fields; Appendix A-II pp1038-45

#### *Recommended Reading:*

Tolkien, “On Translating *Beowulf*” (OLR);

Sept 23

### Mapping the Landscapes: Ecologies of Middles

#### *Required Reading:*

*Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* in J.R.R. Tolkien, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, etc.*);  
JRR Tolkien, “*Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*” (from *BtMatC* or OLR)

#### *Review Reading:* LotR:

1) Shire:

Prologue 1 Concerning Hobbits, 3 Of the Ordering of the Shire

1.1–3 (particularly 1.3 “Three is Company”).

2) Near the Shire: 1.6–8 (the Old Forest, Tom Bombadil, Barrow–Downs).

3) larger M–E.

first view of Caradhras, etc: 2.3.12 p275–76.

Gimli’s poem 2.4 p308–9 .

All of FR, much of TT.

4) Elven settings in M–E:

1.3.9–11 pp75–83;

2.1 Rivendell pp219–232;

2.5–7 (Lothlorien +)

5) forests: (Mirkwood: Hobbit 8) Fangorn 3.4

5) the Far West:

1.8 p132 (1st ¶);

2.1 p227 Eärendil was a mariner;

6.6 Many Partings;

6.9 The Grey Havens;

Appendix A–i

#### *Recommended Reading:*

*Voyage of St. Brendan* (OLR);

Shippey, *Author Of the Century*, c2 (Mapping Out a Plot)

*Silmarillion*: Ainulindalë, Valaquenta, Quenta Silmarillion 1–13, 24; Akallabeth.

HoME 9.1.10–11, pp. 108–135[=early versions of LotR 6.9, the Grey Havens, and unused epilogue] (OLR).

Sept 30

Tom Shippey, on *Author Of the Century*  
*Required Reading: Author Of the Century*  
*Recommended Reading: Road to Middle Earth*

Oct 7

Hero-Crafts: Story-Shaping Heroes

*Required Reading:*

*A. Classical Traditions: Hero as Singer*

*Odyssey* (FAGLES translation preferred if you want to buy a text; otherwise use OLR)

I. 1–12 (p. 77)

VIII. 527–558](pp. 206–207)

IX. 1–43](pp. 211–12)

IX. 558–74](p. 227)

*Aeneid* (MANDELBAUM translation preferred if you want to buy a text; otherwise use OLR)

I. 625–659](pp. 16–17)

II. 1–8 (p. 29)

VI. 1110–1137 (pp. 160–61)

IX. 798–829 (pp. 234–35)

*B. Heroic Virtue in Christian Revision*

*Waltharius* in OLR

vv. 846–77 (p. 43)

vv. 1215–1224 (p. 59)

vv. 1396–1404 (p. 67)

*Ruodlieb* in OLR

III. 1–14 (p. 87)

V. 418–445 (pp. 121–23)

*Review Reading:*

LotR 6.4.3 p928 (epic simile)

*Recommended Reading:*

Vergil, *Aeneid*;

*Song of Roland*;

Runciman, *History of the Crusades*, v1;

W.H. Auden, “The Quest Hero” (OLR) *The Texas*

*Quarterly* 4 (1962) 81–93; repr in Isaacs & Zimbaro,

*Tolkien & the Critics* (U of ND P, c1968)

Oct 14

“At Home”; read *Silmarillion*

SMU Fall break

UTD (MP 2.212)

UD (Lynch Hall)

- Oct 21            Monsters and Heroes: Northern Mythologies  
*Required Reading: Silmarillion*  
                    emphasis on Morgoth, the tale of Beren & Luthien (162)  
                    and especially the tale of Turin (21).  
*Review Reading:*  
                    LotR: chapters on Rohan (see above, Sept. 16)  
*Recommended Reading:*  
                    *Hobbit*: Smaug; concluding chapters)
- Oct 28            Heroes and Monsters: Northern Mythologies  
*Guest lecturer:* Prof. Lee Fratantuono (UD)  
*Required Reading:* all in OLR  
                    Selections from *Snorri's Edda: Gylfaginning*;  
                    Poetic *Edda*  
                            eg, Voluspa, Vafthruthnir, Grimnir, Voluspa hin  
                            skanna, Volund, Fafnir, short Lay of Sigurth;  
                    Selections from *Volsungasaga*: cc34-39? (Morris trans.)  
                    Kalevala: opening sections (creation, duel of singers)  
*Recommended Reading:*  
                    In entirety: *Volsungasaga*; Poetic *Edda*; *Kalevala*; *Njal's*  
                    *saga*, *Grettir's Saga*.
- Nov 4            Jane Chance, on "Tolkien and the Other: Race and Gender in Middle-  
Earth"  
*Required Reading:*  
                    Tolkien's translation of the Old English *Exodus*, ed. Joan  
                    Turville-Petre (OLR)  
                    The Old English "Wanderer" (OLR)  
                    Tolkien Letters 181, 213, 246 (ed. Humphrey Carpenter)  
                    (OLR)  
                    Tolkien's verse drama, "The Homecoming of Beorthnoth  
                    Beorthelm's Son" (in *The Tolkien Reader*)  
                    Tolkien's essay on "Of ermod" (in *The Tolkien Reader*)  
*Review Reading:* LotR  
                    races: Appendix A, Appendix F. *Silmarillion*, passim.  
                    *Fellowship of the Ring*, book 1, chapter 1, on the Hobbits  
                    *Return of the King*, "The Scouring of the Shire"  
                    *Two Towers*, book 1, chapter 3 (on Rohan) and 4 (on  
                    "Treebeard")  
*Recommended Reading:*  
                    HoME 12, The Peoples of M-E, passim.  
                    Tolkien's article on "Sigelwara Land," I and II (about a line

in *Exodus*)  
Tolkien Letters 45, 64, 78, 131, 141(ed. Humphrey  
Carpenter)

- Nov 11      In the Beginning Was the Word: Philology, Polyglossia, and the  
Restoration of Kingship in LotR.”  
*Guest Lecturer:* Prof. John Lewis (SMU)  
*Review Reading:*  
*On language:*  
LotR: Book One, Chapter II, “The Shadow of the Past”  
(pp. 41-63); Book Two, Chapter II “The Council of  
Elrond” (pp. 233-264); Book Three, Chapter IV,  
“Treebeard” (pp. 450-476); Book Four, Chapter V “The  
Window on the West” (pp. 648-667); Book Five, Chapter  
IV "The Siege of Gondor" (pp. 788-811); Book Six,  
Chapter IV "The Field of Cormallen"; Appendix F (pp.  
1101-1112).  
*Silmarillion* passim (things about the Elves’ movements  
sunderings and reunions),
- Nov 18      To “Diss” and to Delight: Tolkien the Critics, the Movies  
Readings: Selections from *Tolkien and the Critics* (OLR)  
Norman Cantor, ‘The Oxford Fantasists’  
Edmund Wilson, ‘Oh Those Awful Orcs!’
- Nov 25      Tolkien’s Aftermath: The Monsters and the Students  
*Required Reading* in OLR:  
The Lost Road, *HoME* 5 pp. 1-108, and especially pp. 36-98;  
The Notion Club Papers, *HoME* 9, pp145-318.  
Valedictory Address (from *tMatC*)
- Dec 2      “At Home” Final Class  
SMU final Class, 306 Dallas Hall  
UTD (MP 2.212)  
UD (Lynch Hall)  
[Paper due, min. 10, max. 15 pages; permission of instructor  
required]
- FINAL EXAM      SMU (306 Dallas Hall) 6:30 Dec 9  
UTD (MP 2.212)  
UD (Lynch Hall)